DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 253 460 SO 016 158

TITLE	Behind "A Nation at Risk": Papers of the National Commission on Excellence in Education. ERIC Fact Sheet No. 9.
INSTITUTION	ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, Boulder, Colo.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Sep 83
CONTRACT	400-83-0012
NOTE	4p.; For related documents, see ED 258 797 and SO 016 162.
AVAILABLE FROM	ERIC/ChESS, 855 Broadway, Boulder, CO 80302.
PUB TYPE	Information Analyses - ERIC Information Analysis Products (071) -- Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Comparative Education; Cross Cultural Studies; Curriculum; Educational Change; *Educational Improvement; *Educational Needs; Educational Practices; Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; Financial Support; Foreign Countries; Intelligence; Leadership; Mathematics Education; Social Studies; Standards; Student Motivation; Teacher Education; Teaching Methods; Time on Task; Values
IDENTIFIERS	*Nation at Risk (A)

ABSTRACT

Commissioned papers to help the National Commission on Excellence in Education make the recommendations for educational improvement for its report "A Nation at Risk" are cited in this annotated listing. The report presents recommendations in five areas: content, standards and expectations, time, teaching, and leadership and fiscal support. Summaries of eight of these papers are provided. They deal with student motivation, understanding intelligence, what is learned in schools, K-12 curriculum, inservice teacher education, values learned in school, and the curricula of foreign countries. Because the Commission's recommendations are presented in only ten pages, they do not provide detailed guidance for those working toward educational excellence at the local level. These educators may therefore find that the numerous papers prepared for the Commission will shed light on how the Commission reached its conclusions and formulated recommendations. The titles of ten additional papers are also provided. All papers are available through ERIC. (RM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sydney Meredith

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED253460

BEHIND "A NATION AT RISK:"

PAPERS OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

ERIC Fact Sheet No. 9

ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education

Boulder, Colorado

September 1983

SO 016 158

ERIC

Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education
855 Broadway
Boulder, Colorado 80302

FACT SHEET NO. 9

September 1983

BEHIND *A NATION AT RISK:* PAPERS OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

In April 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education submitted its report to the Secretary of Education. Provocatively titled *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform,* the report grabbed the attention of politicians, the media, educators, and the public. Almost everyone involved in education has had something to say about the report, whether critical or laudatory. The early campaign rhetoric of presidential hopefuls seems bound to ensure that the report and those of numerous other studies of education (a recent issue of *Education Week* listed 30 current studies) will continue to receive a good deal of public attention.

Whether or to what extent the commission's recommendations will be implemented is less sure. The report presents major and implementing recommendations in five areas: content, standards and expectations, time, teaching, and leadership and fiscal support. Implementing many of the recommendations will be costly; priorities may need to be set and choices made if these recommendations are to be acted upon. While social studies is listed as one of the "New Basics" to be required of high school students, the report's greater emphasis on teaching mathematics and science may mean that fewer dollars will actually be available for program improvement in social studies.

Because the commission's recommendations are presented in a mere ten pages, they do not provide detailed guidance for those working toward educational excellence at the local level. These educators may therefore find that the numerous papers prepared by experts for the commission will shed light on how the commission reached its conclusions and formulated recommendations as well as providing more detailed ideas regarding how education in the United States can be improved.

Listed below are several documents selected from those commissioned papers. All of the commissioned papers have been entered into the ERIC data base (see the June through August 1983 issues of *Resources in Education),* as has *A Nation At Risk* itself (ED 226 006; MF-$0.97/PC-$5.65, plus postage). All are available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service, Box 190, Arlington, VA 22210. All orders must be prepaid (including postage) and must give the ERIC document number and specify whether microfiche (MF) or paper copy (PC) is desired.

ED 227 111. *Motivating Students to Learn: A Lifelong Perspective,* by Deborah J. Stipek. 1982. 56 pp. EDRS price: MF-$0.97/PC-$5.65, plus postage.

Two questions are addressed: (1) What are the motivational characteristics of a child who is most likely to achieve in school at an optimal level? and (2) What kind of educational environment fosters these characteristics? Evidence suggesting that external rewards and punishment can have negative long-term effects on achievement motivation is reviewed. Discussed is theoretical and empirical work demonstrating that it is not reinforcement per se that influences children's behavior, but beliefs about one's competencies, perceptions of the cause of achievement outcomes, and values regarding achievement-related rewards that determine behavior.

For maintaining high motivation in children, the following strategies are recommended: (1) evaluating on a mastery rather than a normative standard, (2) minimizing salient public evidence of individual children's performance, (3) considering errors as a normal aspect of mastering new skills, and (4) providing opportunities for all children to demonstrate competence in activities valued by the teacher. Encouraging students to trust their own evaluations and to set reasonable goals and providing greater autonomy in learning situations are suggested.

ED 227 110. *Understanding Intelligence: What's in It for Educators?,* by Robert J. Sternberg and Richard K. Wagner. 1982. 82 pp. EDRS price: MF-$0.97/PC-$7.40, plus postage.

This three-part report discusses the concept of intelligence and its importance for educators. Part 1 considers the basic question of what intelligence is. Part 2 discusses the implications of notions of intelligence for schooling, dealing with both the training of content knowledge and the training of intellectual skills. Each of these first two parts is divided into sections that discuss the psychometric view, the Piagetian view, the information-processing view, and comparison and evaluation of alternative approaches. Part 3 presents an outline of a program of instruction for intellectual skills, based upon a particular theory of intelligence.

ED 227 100. *What Is Learned in Schools: Responding to School Demands in Grades K-6,* by Thomas L. Good. 1982. 88 pp. EDRS price: MF-$0.97/PC-$7.40, plus postage.

Individual teacher behaviors, characteristics, and instructional methods make an important difference in what and how well students learn. Children enter school with a wide variety of differences in family background and aspirations, expectations, and previous learning. Research on learning in the home, nursery school, and kindergarten points out the differences between the learning environments of school and home settings and differences between the teachers' and parents' expectations and approaches to teaching.

Once in the school environment, the student encounters a variety of instructional styles and classroom expectations that often pose problems as students move from class to class or grade to grade. In addition, a student's background may conflict with the general school culture or that of a particular teacher. In this paper, which discusses current trends and research on this topic, questions are raised about instructional practices such as tracking, pull-out instruction, and ability grouping on the grounds that they often create difficult teaching/learning situations. The general effects of teacher expectations on student performance are discussed, with suggestions for improvement given.

ED 227 097. *Academic Work*, by Walter Doyle. 1982. 87 pp. EDRS price: MF-$0.97/PC-$7.40, plus postage.

This paper focuses on a relatively new emphasis in education research: the nature of academic work contained in the curriculum of elementary and secondary schools, how that work is organized and accomplished in classrooms, and what modifications in academic work are likely to increase student achievement. The paper is divided into two major sections. The first is devoted to an analysis of the intellectual demands inherent in different forms of academic work. Of special importance in this section is the recent work on cognitive processes that underlie school tasks. The second section is directed to studies of how academic work is carried on in classroom environments. Particular attention in this section is given to the ways in which social and evaluative conditions in classrooms affect students' reactions to work. Each section contains an analysis of implications for improving the quality of academic work in classrooms and thus increasing student achievement. Also presented is an extensive bibliography (21 pages).

ED 227 095. *Motivational Factors in School Achievement*, by Martin L. Maehr. 1982. 79 pp. EDRS price: MF-$0.97/PC-$7.40, plus postage.

Maehr summarizes the literature on motivation relating to achievement in the classroom. Special attention is given to how values, ideology, and various cultural patterns may serve to enhance motivation to achieve in the classroom. In considering what determines motivation and personal investment in educational pursuits, the following factors are discussed: (1) individual personality, (2) teacher expectations, (3) dimensions of academic tasks, (4) sociocultural expectations, and (5) family background and aspirations.

Recent research on motivation and achievement provides a rationale for the increasing emphasis being placed on judgments that the individual makes in relationship to perceived situations. Four components that figure prominently in motivation are discussed: (1) self-identity, (2) perceived autonomy and responsibility, (3) sense of direction, and (4) sense of competence. The final section identifies certain conclusions that may be useful in planning policy changes to improve schooling.

ED 227 075. *Inservice Education*, by Sam J. Yarger. 1982. 63 pp. EDRS price: MF-$0.97/PC-$5.65, plus postage.

This paper on the state of inservice teacher education is divided into five parts. The first, which focuses on the context in which teaching occurs and on the role of the teacher, points out that while the common denominator in the study of teaching is the teacher/learner relationship, social issues also affect teachers and teaching. In the paper's second section, a profile is drawn of the current state of inservice education, including the magnitude of the endeavor, knowledge base, program content, program delivery, and evaluation.

The third part of the paper gives examples of five high quality inservice programs and describes identified characteristics of effective inservice: client involvement, recognition of district and school needs, focus on instruction of children, skill-drive training, and in-class observation, feedback, and coaching. In the fourth part, three issues confronting education today are examined: the politicalization of inservice education, lack of institutional commitment, and the problem of incorporating inservice into the responsibilities of elementary and secondary teachers.

The final section of the paper presents a recommendation for the founding of an American Education Congress. A brief discussion outlines the potential strengths of such a Congress in bringing about consensual policy-setting and monitoring of education, specifically teacher education.

ED 227 072. *The Values Learned in School: Policy and Practice in Industrialized Countries*, by Judith Torney-Purta and John Schwille. 1982. 83 pp. EDRS price: MF-$0.97/PC-$7.40, plus postage.

This paper presents a comparative analysis of values education in the United States, Germany, Japan, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, Sweden, and Canada. Analyzed are eight assertions: (1) no institution with education as its primary aim can be value neutral; (2) countries differ in values that characterize their political cultures and in values that are taught in school; (3) none of the countries studied has had a uniformly high level of success in transmitting civic values; (4) the learning of values is strongly influenced by factors outside the school's control; (5) educational policy has been somewhat effective in bringing about desired changes in values; (6) the learning of values in school is not limited to mandated programs of moral and civic education; (7) several nations have developed curricular goals to promote common core values; and (8) television and other mass media have an important and often negative effect on values. Recommended a coalition agenda describing values that ought to be learned together with actions needed if these values are to be embodied in practice.

ED 227 068. *A Comparative Review of Curriculum: Mathematics and International Studies in the Secondary Schools of Five Countries*, by Max A. Eckstein and others. 1982. 115 pp. EDRS price: MF-$0.97/PC-$9.15, plus postage.

This paper describes curriculum content in two areas in the secondary schools of Canada, Japan, West Germany, the Soviet Union, and the United States. Relevant background on teacher preparation and on the structure and organization of secondary schools in each country is introduced to provide a context for the information provided. The paper's second part summarizes major conceptual and methodological issues in comparative studies and in comparative curriculum. In the third section, the content of the mathematics programs is presented. The international studies component of the broader social studies curriculum is described and discussed in the fourth section: a case history of the curriculum in each country is presented. In the fifth part, concluding observations draw attention to the issues of the nature, possibilities, and problems of comparative curriculum study, the two curriculum areas, teachers and instruction, and considerations of curriculum change and policy making.

Among the other papers prepared for the National Commission on Excellence in Education are the following:

ED 228 246. *Schooling in America: Some Descriptive and Explanatory Statements*, by Thomas L. Good and Gail M. Hinkel.

ED 228 243. *A Review of Effective Schools Research: Implications for Practice and Research*, by Eleanor Farrar and others.

ED 228 239. *The Years Between Elementary School and High School: What Schooling Experiences Do Students Have?*, by Beatrice Ward and others.

ED 227 108. *Twenty-Five Years of American Education: An Interpretation*, by Joseph Adelson.

ED 227 106. *A Summary Report on the Educational Systems of the United States and the Soviet Union: Comparative Analysis*, by Catherine P. Ailes and Francies W. Rushing.

ED 227 0[illegible] *he Changing American Child: The Perspective of Ed[illegible]ors*, by Herbert Zimiles.

ED 227 098. *Excellence and Equity in American Education*, by Alexander W. Astin.

ED 225 994. *Demographic Change and Curriculum: "New Students" in Higher Education*, by Herman Blake.

ED 225 993. *A Little Light on the Subject: Keeping General and Liberal Education Alive*, by Zelda Gamson

ED 225 991. *An Analytic Comparison of Educational Systems*, by Barbara H. Burn and Christopher H. Hurn.